

At Rollapadu, 20 km east of Nandikotkur town (15°52'N & 78°18'E) in Kurnool district, where the BNHS has a field station under the Endangered Species Project (Great Indian Bustard), two Black Storks were first seen on

7th November 1985, and after that two to a maximum of six birds were regularly seen till December 1985. Enquiries from local shikaris revealed that this stork is a regular winter visitor every year in this part of the state.

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REFERENCE

ALI, S. & RIPLEY, S. D. (1983): Handbook of the Birds of India & Pakistan (compact edition). Oxford University Press, Delhi.

8. SIGHTING OF RED-NECKED GREBES (*PODICEPS GRISEGENA*)
ON THE PONG DAM LAKE, HIMACHAL PRADESH

We visited the Pong Dam Lake on 2 December 1985 as part of a survey to assess the potential of the lake for the creation of a bird sanctuary. Our survey included a trip by motor launch which covered the southwestern end of the lake, adjacent to the dam. During the course of this boat trip we observed two Red-necked Grebes (*Podiceps grisegena*) about 500 m from the shore and 1 km from the dam, in an area where the water depth probably exceeds 50 m.

In shape and size the birds resembled Great Crested Grebes (*P. cristatus*), with tall, slender necks and long, tapering bills. They differed from that species mainly in the coloration of the breast and sides to the neck which were dusky brown instead of white. The crown was black and made a strong contrast with the white cheeks, but at the minimum range at which we observed them (80 m) we could

not discern the exact pattern of black and white around the eye. However, the extent of black on the face appeared greater than is seen in a winter-plumage Great Crested Grebe. The plumage of the two birds was similar.

Both birds took flight at the approach of the launch, becoming airborne with great difficulty after pattering along the surface for a considerable distance. In flight they showed a double pale bar on the wing. One of us (AJG) is familiar with Red-necked Grebes on the Pacific coast of Canada and was able to identify the birds immediately.

This record appears to be the first for Red-necked Grebe in India. The second edition of the HANDBOOK (Ali and Ripley 1979) includes the species for the sub-continent on the basis of a record from Nammal Lake, Pakistan, in the Punjab Salt Range, a little over 300 km west of the Pong Dam. Otherwise the species

breeds sparingly throughout most of the northern Holarctic, wintering in temperate latitudes, mainly in marine inshore waters. The closest place where the species winters regularly is the southern end of the Caspian Sea (Cramp 1977).

The size of the Pong Dam Lake (about 7000 ha when full) and its situation in the extreme northwest of lowland India, make it very suitable to intercept migrants entering the plains from central Asia. In addition to the grebes we saw about 10,000 ducks, mainly Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), with some Pintail (*A. acuta*), Gadwall (*A. strepera*), Teal (*A. crecca*) and Pochard (*Aythya ferina*), and moderate numbers of waders, particularly Temminck's Stint (*Calidris temminckii*), Redshank (*Tringa totanus*), Greenshank (*T. nebularia*) and Green

and Common Sandpipers (*T. ochropus* and *T. hypoleucos*). We also saw several Blackheaded and Great Blackheaded Gulls (*Larus ridibundus* and *L. ichthyaetus*), species which are otherwise rare in Himachal Pradesh. Further observations, particularly during the migration period, should yield many more species.

Any birdwatchers visiting the area are encouraged to contact the Divisional Forest Office at Dehra, at the western end of the lake, for information. In due course the Himachal Forest Department hope to provide facilities for observing birds on the lake, including access paths and observation towers.

We would like to thank the management of the Pong Dam for putting their motor launch at our disposal.

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REFERENCES

ALI, S. & RIPLEY, S. DILLON (1979): Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan, 2nd edition, Volume 1. Oxford University Press: New Delhi.

CRAMP, S. (1977): Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Volume 1. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

9. SOME ASPECTS OF BEHAVIOUR OBSERVED IN THE GREATER FLAMINGO AT BHIGWAN

On 27th June, 1985 I accompanied Mr. Humayun Abdulali on a field trip to observe the Greater Flamingos at Bhigwan on the Pune-Sholapur road. I have been visiting the area for several years, but what was noteworthy throughout 1985 was the large number

of juveniles constituting a fair proportion of some flocks.

This indicates that though the 'Flamingo City' in the Great Rann is not where it used to be, they are breeding at some other unknown place. During this trip on several